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A STORY OF MALTA.

By Virginia W. Johnson:

CHAPTER XIII



moist brow, and gazed, vacantly, about him. "Good God!" he groaned, his pinched features contracting with anxiety and fear. "Who would have ever believed it? How could I have forseen this day?

Accursed knaves!" Two weeks earlier his agitation might have been attributed to the flight of his grand-daughter; but, in fact, the old man had sustained her loss with remarkable equanimity and resignation.

"It is her Spanish blood," he had muttered aloud, after reading the note written by Dolores before sailing. "She must be full of tricks as she grows older. Let her go, once for

In his profound egotism he might even have been suspected of a sentiment of relief that a burthen was removed. Sorrow, apprehension, regret for the rash step taken by a ung girl, wholly ignorant of world-did these paternal misgivings fail to touch the heart of Jacob Dealtry? He gave no sign.

When a letter from Lieut. Curzon, dated Lugano, had been received, announcing the marriage, and enclosing a second, faulty, little missive, written in Italian, from the bride, he had read the two communications without comment, and thrust the crushed envelope into the pocket of his threadbare

Now a far more severe misfortune had stricken the old man, and his whole being threatened to collapse in the shock.

The event which moved Jacob Dealtry to despair had convulsed all native Malta as with an earthquake

Italy, actuated by the aim of consolidating a national currency, had recalled the coin known as the Sicilian dollar. The government of Malta announcing the decision, had given an ultimate date for all money of this denomination in circulation on the Island, to be brought to a given place and redeemed.

The unexpected tidings were received and discussed with a perturbation of which municipal authority may have previously entertained no suspicion. The Maltese, bigoted by tradition and distrustful by temperament, had remained cold amidst the fever of modern speculation, hoarding his worldly goods rather than risking all in bank, railway shares or loans. To pessess gold one should be able to handle and count the glittering coins frequently. Such is his creed. Moreover, to obey the present summons would be to fully reveal one's treas-

ure, a course to be deplored. Malta wept, prayed, raved in secret. In vain! The nobleman in his palace, penurious and abtemious of life, the merchant, the man of law, the sailor, the fisherman, equally cursed the tem poral dispensation which so ruthlessly inveiled the actual condition of indi-

widual finances to public curiosity. Here was a situation almost unique in history. The island must divulge her wealth as far as the Sicilian dollar was concerned. Now the Sicilian dollar was a coin of preference to manipulate, and sufficiently convenient to slip into unsuspected hiding-places, where neither moth nor rust need be feared, nor thieves break

Swift and unforeseen stroke of desor be flung from the wheel of fortune

During the period of waiting, conjecture and doubt, when rumor still lacked complete confirmation, Jacob Dealtry had gone about like one distraught, seeking news. Each neigh-bor was absorbed in his own gloomy meditations, and did not especially heed the eccentric foreigner.

Alone in the Watch Tower, his conduct did not astonish grandchild or lon. Night and day became as one to

At the first hint of impending change food as was to be found in the house, be had baunted the streets of Valetta the need of nature was mechanically and the quay, eager to glean fresh fulfilled. He did not miss his grandnews from any source. Then he had daughter. He had forgotten her and a returned home, to sink down on the fever of unrest consumed him. Constone bench, spent, dejected and broken in spirit.

In all the prudent calculation of and again withholding him in a dull,

years it had been impossible to realize passive resignation.

He remained there inert, devoid of power of thought or speech, his brain clouded, his tongue dumb. Time posessed no more value to him. Human eings were specters.

One fact gradually became clear to his perception-he would no longer dare to live here, isolated, defenseless, hugging his miserable and ignoble secret. He must flee from Malta in old age and decrepitude. The Sicilian dollar was his Nemesis, the angel with the flaming sword, destined to drive him forth from this paradise of his own choice. How could the instinct of the miser, which had been the taint of his soul for years, growing to a noxious parasite, checking the current of all noble purpose, have chosen a better refuge than this remote island, whose inhabitants were prudent, like

At length the dormant nature of the man was aroused and struggled fiercely for supremacy. The greed of avarice wrestled with conscience. It were better to leave the Sicilian dollar safely buried out of sight than stand coin! Now it had become fairy gold, and no better than a heap of withered autumn leaves! What! Give up all! Lose all! Never! Never!

The past rose, at the moment, before the dimmed vision of Jacob Deal-

He had dwelt at Jamaica, as Capt. Fillingham surmised. He had been a clerk in London, and subsisted on a meagre salary through youth and early manhood. Then a summons from the West Indies advised him, as next of kin, that he inherited the property of a cousin, a trader of courage and ability, who had amassed considerable wealth.

From the beginning fortune had dazzled and frightened Jacob Dealtry, narrow-minded and economical by education. Sleep forsook his pillow at the thought of rash investments. and the artful wiles of his cousin's old associates. He wished to escape from their net. His wife died, and during the childhood of his son he counted his possessions with tremulous anxiety. He strove ever to hold his own. The son took ship for Spain, and married a pretty Andalusian. Jacob Dealtry's inherent suspicion found cause of disapproval of this early marriage. He departed from Jamaida without leaving traces of to any one

The measure was the outward symptom of a canker of the soul young couple would squander his money as lightly as a bride smoked a

eigarette, or toyed with her fan. The son devoted the remainder of his life to finding the missing parent The young man was actuated by apprehension of foul play, and a sincere wish to fulfil his own final duties. Smitten with fever, he left the sole remaining clue in his possession to his wife and child. He had ascertained, after much fruitless quest in the laby-rinth of London life, that a person of the name of Jacob Dealtry dwelt at Malta. This last hope of succor had led the mother and child to the Watch Tower, where they had been ungraciously received by a man reputed poor, and who earned a humble livelihood by copying documents for an advocate, when chance afforded such employ-



ment, or picking up archaelogical relies, and deciphering Punic inscriptions, self-taught, and zealous in research.

The Andalusian dangiter in law faded, and died of eunui, disappoint-ment, and chagrin, leaving little Dolores.

The old man rose from the bench and began to walk about his narrow domain. He tossed his arms above his head and uttered imprecations, wild, wrathful and impotent, against those with all grades of society, agreeable who had reduced him to this sorry plight. To reveal his board to all eyes, or to lose it! Terrible, incredible alternative! Ah, why had he distrusted the crisp bank note, easily folded and secured in the lining of raiment, a bed, a chair, tormented by tiny coming to overturn the estab- dread of rats and mice, mildew and lished order of things! The world storms? Blindly, foolishly he had changes, and one must change with it, chosen the hard, bright coin, indestructible to mischevious agents of harm the teeth of rodents, and rain. The Sicilian dollar had played him false. He saw it all now that such knowledge came too late, He lived in a sort of delirium. He

scoffed at the impending catastrophe. He need not act with undue precipitation. There was still time for reflection and to rearrange his disordered ideas. He kept reassuring himself in this fashhim. If he slept or partook of such food as was to be found in the house

Suddenly the note of a church bell

H. F. Berner Line and State of the contract of

He paused in his aimless rambling about house and garden, indulging in fitful soliloquies, and listened. The bell marked the passing hour. He was startled, shocked, appalled. Time was ebbing rapidly, like the sand in the glass. His distorted fancy thus interpreted the warning of the clock Would he be too late?

He stood as if frozen with horror, his white hair bristling on his head, his eye dilated and fixed. A voice shrieked these words:

"I am rich, rich! My treasure lies buried here all about me. Help me to unearth it before it is too late!'

Who had spoken? He could not determine whether his own lips had moved, or he heard an echo of his thoughts at his side. He was no longer alone. Mocking faces jibed at him, taunting his helplessness, his tardy recognition of the impending evil.

Then a beautiful shape, clothed in shining radiance, put saide the others, branded as an imposter. How he had schemed to convert most of the wealth brought with him into the current of the Watch Tower The coin spun brought with him into the current here, there, on all sides, eluding, dazsling, intangible

Jacob Dealtry, aroused to frenzy haste, after long delay, began to seek in the crevices of his dwelling, beneath the fountain basin, behind the remorseful solicitude.
beehives, at the angle of the garden Florio trotted around the garden

If he paused to rest, his feeble strength exhausted, the Sicilian dollar flashed before his troubled vision, scoffing at his forgetfulness of still another hiding-place, and goading ble on a former occasion. him to fresh exertions.

Shrill laughter and odd cries were audible occasionally in the enclosure. Jacob Dealtry had lost his reason.

A vessel approached Malta, the Elettrico from Messina.

Among the passengers on board were Leut Curzon and his wife. His brief leave of absence had nearly expired, and he was about to rejoin his ship. Dolores, beaming with happiness, and her savage grace already refined by travel, still held Florio under one arm.

Malta gave slight heed to these new arrivals in the more profound emotions of the hour. Malta, whether of high or of low degree, was bringing the Sicilian dollar to the treasrry mart at the appointed time. The coin arrived in bag, purse, scoffer, and even himself, or revealing his future plans transported in rude boxes on primitive vehicles, the owners sadly crestfallen and anxious as to results.

The fact was clearly proved that and fluttering pulse of the old man. the stronghold of the Knights Templar was the richest island of similar dimensions in the world.

The recluse of the Watch Tower was not the only victim of the pranks of lar to compare with the unconscious the Sicilian dollar on this occasion. Dolores? Disbursement of hoards long concealed sowed discontent, envy, and suspicion on every side. Creditors frowned on debtors, proved to have slightly from stupor, and gazed atservants askance.

The Busatti couple met on their own threshold with mutual confusion and anger. "Thou!," exclaimed the husband, in

accents of unfeigned astonishment, Dolores. hugging a much-worn, leather pouch under his arm. "Thou!" echoed the wife, in even

sharper tones, and clutching a heavy sack of coarse linen.

vision for age when his children may find him a burden," said the husband, church. apologetically.

the wife tartly. "May the Madonna Mrs. Griffith, Capt. Fillingham and help me to save a soldo for some his wife. masses to be sung for the repose of my soul when I die!"

Even Dr. Busatti emerged from the house counting some pieces of money in his left spalm. And Dolores? Her face clouded as

she once more climbed the steps of Valletta. Remorse and apprehension the old Watch Tower was full of gold began to weigh on her heart. In vain hoarded by the miserly grandfather. she sought for the small and bent He must have been the Jamaica tradform of her grandfather in the crowd. Why should he be there unless attracted by a sentiment of curiosity? "He is all alone," she faltered. "He may have been ill and neglected while we have been so happy. Ah, poor

grandpapa!" Her husband soothed and reassured her. Certainly Jacob Dealtry should want for nothing, yet the old man in-

Tower. A neighbor hinted that Jacob Dealtry had not been seen to emerge from the garden gate for several days.

The young physician approached the portal and knocked. There was no response. At this moment Dolores and Lient Curzon appeared on the path. Greetings were exchanged. Possibly these two men recognized. with a swift and mutual intuition of change, how strangely the tangled thread of life had involved and brought them back to a common starting point, the threshold of Jacob Dealtry's door.

The day was calm and serene, the silence unbroken. The pigeons flew up on the roof and spread their feathers in the sun. The bees swarmed in a dark cloud over the wall.

Dolores grew pale as the knocking on the gate was repeated. Ah, if they had come too late! Florio increased Dolores cast a frightened glance about her, and pressed her hands to her throbbing heart.

stillness. "Grandpapa! here. Open the door." Dolores is

group of listeners detected a sound, a brought from Russia. It is a lit' slow movement, within the enclosure, more delicate than gelatine.

the heavy dragging of root on the ground. The bolt moved, the chain attled and then Dr. Busatti pushed against the barrier. Jacob Dealtry and fallen in making this final effort.

The garden presented an appearance of the utmost disorder and dilapidaion. Plants were uprooted, stones isslodged, the soil disturbed. In the restibule of the tower the portrait of the Knight lay on the floor, revealing an open door in the wall, and the carved chair, overturned, was shown to have concealed a second recess in the wall. All about the old man heaps of shining coin lay scattered, rolling n a reckless profusion on the path, in half emptied boxes, in tangled masses of rags, in bags of leather, cloth and

Lieut. Curzon was scornfully silent Dr. Busatti uttered an involuntary exclamation of surprise and dismay and wiped his damp brow. If the former realized, with swift conviction, that Jacob Dealtry must have been seeking some fresh hiding place for only to prove the more maddening in seeking some fresh hiding place for turn. This airy form was the Sicilian his money when he found him in the ruined temple, the emotion of Dr. Busatti was far more lively when he actually trod upon the Sicilian dollar in order to aid the unconscious

owner. Dolores in advance of both of her companions, had knelt and lifted her grandfather's head on her breast with

with utter unconcern, and, plunging into the clump of reeds, brought out a broken fan in his mouth.

"Help him!" besought Dolores, with a touch of the imperiousness percepti-

"I fear he is overdone," said the physician, again testing the feeble



JACOB DEALTRY HAD FALLEN.

Did Dr. Busatti, in the abstraction permitted to science under similar circumstances, realise that Malta could boast of no heiress of the Sicilian dol-

Truly, "He who has gold, or a devil,

can not hide it." That night Jacob Dealtry rallied full pockets. Masters eyed thrifty tentively at Lieut. Curzon, who stood at his bedside, while Dolores knelt, holding his cold hand.

"James," he articulated, half wonderingly, mistaking the officer for his son long dead. Then his glance sought

"The Andalusian," he murmured, and once more closed his eyes. An hour later his breath exhaled in

these words, "Too late!" The following summer Mr. Ford, "Eh! What would you have, my the clergyman with a weak chest, soul? A man must make a little pro- preached a sermon on the landing of St. Paul at Malta in his own parish

Among the edified listeners were his "I have daughters to marry," said bride, formerly Miss Ethel Symthe,

The morning service terminated, the captain walked with Mrs. Griffith through the churchyard, in the direction of the vicarage. "Our young friend, Arthur Curzon, will come in for a pot of money," he remarked in a confidential undertone. "They say er, Jacob Dealtry. A simple maiden in her flower is worth a hundred coats-of-arms, you know. When I was with Admiral Jack in the Baltic—" "John, dear, Mr. Ford is waiting to take us to lunch," interposed Mrs.

Fillingham, pausing at the door of the Vicarage. "Some women are fidgety listeners. at the best," quoth the ancient marspired only contempt in the mind of iner. "I must try to secure a Sicilian the officer, as on the occasion of their dollar for my collection of coins. I have some good specimens of floring. Dr. Busatti quitted the town to visit and the Venetian zecchin and osele. a patient in the vicinity of the Watch Let us all return to Malta next winter."

Shot Down in Her Home.

John Antvindis and Grant Fulkerth. of Greenville, Ohio, have been arrested charged with the assassination of Mrs. Henry Wright. While quietly passing the evening at their home in Van Buren township at 9 o'clock, the assassins went up to a window and discharged a heavy loaded shotgun at Mr. and Mrs. Wright. Almost the entire load entered her side and back and pierced the lung. The husband received a wound in the arm from scattering shot. The shot was intended for Mr. Wright, but struck his wife as she stepped in front of him. The woman is dying. The cause of the crime was a case in court concerning guardianship matters in which all her agitation by whining pitifully. parties were interested. There is

"Grandpapa!"

The fresh young voice pierced the effect in the thickening of jelly. Isir glass is a little the more expensive It is said to be made from the bladde Surely the strained attention of the of the sturgeon, and the best is th der Caller

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month, and ing May backets

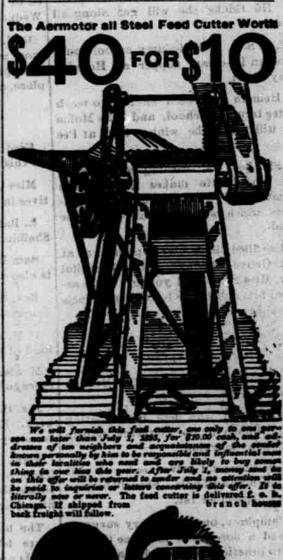
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